

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/594,149
Amendment filed August 25, 2008
Reply to OA dated May 27, 2008

REMARKS

The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated May 17, 2008.

Claims 1 - 16 are currently pending in this patent application for the Examiner's consideration, claims 1 and 5 being independent claims. Claims 17 - 20 have been withdrawn as non-elected claims.

In the outstanding Action, claims 1 - 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 5,699,056) in view of Berezovsky (U.S. Patent No. 6,175,313). The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection.

The applicant's claimed invention, as recited in independent claim 1, is directed to a map information display control device, which includes a map information acquirer which acquires map information; and an information acquirer which acquires map component information forming the map information with at least one of traffic information relating to a traffic status or feature information relating to a feature. The applicant's claimed map information display control device further includes a time information acquirer which acquires time information relating to a time when

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the map component information is acquired; a timer which counts an elapsed time up to a current time based on the time information; and a display controller which controls a display unit to display the map information and to superpose the map component information relating to the elapsed time having exceeded a predetermined time period on the map information in a display pattern with higher transparency than the map component information relating to the elapsed time not having exceeded the predetermined time period.

Significant claimed structural arrangements of the claimed invention, as recited in independent claim 1, include the claimed time information acquirer which acquires time information relating to a time when the map component information is acquired; and the claimed display controller which controls a display unit to display the map information and to superpose the map component information relating to the elapsed time having exceeded a predetermined time period on the map information in a display pattern with higher transparency than the map component information relating to the elapsed time not having exceeded the predetermined time period.

The applicant's claimed invention, as set forth in independent claim 5, is directed to a map information display control device, which includes a map information acquirer which acquires map information; and an information acquirer which acquires: map component information forming the map information with at least one of traffic information relating to a traffic status or feature information relating to a feature, and information containing time information relating to a time

when the map component information is generated. The claimed invention, as recited in claim 5, further includes a timer which counts an elapsed time up to a current time based on the time information; and a display controller which controls a display unit to display the map information and to superpose the map component information of the information relating to the elapsed time having exceeded a predetermined time period on the map information in a display pattern with higher transparency than the map component information of the information relating to the elapsed time not having exceeded the predetermined time period.

Significant claimed structural arrangements of the claimed invention, as recited in independent claim 5, include the claimed information acquirer which acquires: map component information forming the map information with at least one of traffic information relating to a traffic status or feature information relating to a feature, and information containing time information relating to a time when the map component information is generated, as well as the claimed display controller which controls a display unit to display the map information and to superpose the map component information of the information relating to the elapsed time having exceeded a predetermined time period on the map information in a display pattern with higher transparency than the map component information of the information relating to the elapsed time not having exceeded the predetermined time period.

The primary reference of Yoshida, on the other hand, teaches that traffic information (such as, traffic jam, accident or the like) is determined based on information collected by information collecting apparatuses carried on a plurality of vehicles. In Yoshida, although time information is sent to a central apparatus, Yoshida's time information only constitutes a factor for generating the traffic information (i.e., a map component information), which is neither a teaching of the applicant's "time information relating to a time when the map component information is acquired" (claim 1; emphasis added) nor a teaching of the applicant's time information relating to a time when the map component information is generated" (claim 5; emphasis added). To the contrary, since the traffic information is determined based on information from a plurality of probe vehicles, the "acquisition" time of the map component information cannot be unambiguously determined in Yoshida's device. Consequently, in the Yoshida device, no timer for counting the elapsed time from the acquisition time is provided. In addition, Yoshida does not disclose the changing of a display pattern of more-than-predetermined-time-elapsed map information, as acknowledged by the Examiner.

Moreover, Berezovsky merely discloses that remaining time of the traffic light is indicated by a remaining portion of the illuminated wedge-shaped transparent member 24, 38. It is submitted however that, when the green traffic light signal 26 is lit, the wedge-shaped indicator 24 corresponding to the green traffic light signal 26 is simultaneously lit (i.e., the transparency changes at this time) and no change in the transparency can be found while the green signal remains lit (i.e., the indicator is kept lit) (see, Berezovsky's Figs. 1a-1c). In other words, the transparency of the

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display (window) 36 changes only when the corresponding signal is lit, where the elapsed time of the signal does not have an effect on the transparency of the component.

Accordingly, the applicant submits that the suggested combined teachings of the cited references would still fall far short in fully meeting the applicant's claimed invention, as recited in each of independent claims 1 and 5 (and the claims that respectively depend therefrom), and the benefits or advantages derived therefrom.

In view of the above, the withdrawal of the outstanding obviousness rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 5,699,056) in view of Berezovsky (U.S. Patent No. 6,175,313) is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, the claims are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

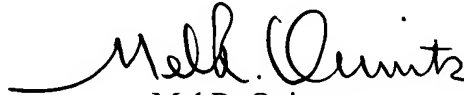
If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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